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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

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RELATING TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is a need for  
2 community readiness centers in various communities to ensure  
3 emergency preparedness. According to the report entitled,  
4 "Policy Recommendations on Climate Disaster Resilience, Recovery  
5 and Funding", published by the Hawaii climate advisory team in  
6 January 2025, the climate and advisory team recommends support  
7 for the development of community readiness centers, which are  
8 designed to support residents before, during, and after  
9 emergencies, including natural disasters. A community readiness  
10 center will provide services before disasters to enhance daily  
11 resilience of individuals, families, businesses, and  
12 organizations, and will provide critical support such as food,  
13 shelter, water, communications, and more, during and after  
14 emergencies. In addition, community readiness centers will  
15 serve as a place for residents to receive emergency preparedness  
16 training and emergency information, supplies, and basic medical  
17 care during and after an emergency event. The community



1 readiness centers will also be used to store and refrigerate  
2 medical supplies and provide a place for residents to charge  
3 electrical devices and access the Internet. The establishment  
4 of these community readiness centers will require partnerships  
5 between numerous agencies and private entities and the  
6 legislature finds that the Hawaii emergency management agency is  
7 the most suitable agency to coordinate the establishment of  
8 community readiness centers.

9 The legislature further finds that community readiness  
10 center sites should be carefully identified to ensure proper  
11 connection to the electrical grid and be equipped with a solar  
12 and back-up battery storage system to guard against power  
13 outages. Residents should be directly involved in the location  
14 and design of community readiness centers in their respective  
15 communities.

16 The legislature also finds that Battery Birkhimer houses  
17 the state emergency operations center, which is where the Hawaii  
18 emergency management agency is currently based. The need for a  
19 new state emergency operations center is urgent and has been  
20 mentioned in state emergency management plans for more than ten  
21 years, including in objective 3.04 in the Hawaii emergency



1 management agency's 2020-2025 strategic plan. Other emergency  
2 operations agencies have identified a need for updated  
3 facilities, increased administrative space, and in-state  
4 training facilities, among other ancillary uses. In addition,  
5 many of these agencies' existing facilities are within coastal  
6 areas that are vulnerable to natural disasters and climate  
7 change hazards. The new state emergency operations center  
8 requires, at a minimum, the same critical infrastructure as  
9 community readiness centers to sustain operations during times  
10 of disaster, including proper connection to the electrical grid,  
11 and should be equipped with a solar and back-up battery storage  
12 system to guard against power outages.

13 Accordingly, the legislature finds that community readiness  
14 center sites should be strategically co-located in conjunction  
15 with emergency operations centers. Following the action and  
16 guidance identified in "Ola: Oahu Resilience Strategy",  
17 published in 2019 by the city and county of Honolulu's office of  
18 climate change, sustainability, and resilience, community  
19 readiness and emergency operations centers should also be  
20 located outside of areas vulnerable to natural disasters and the  
21 impacts of climate change.



1. The legislature notes that the use of funds from the  
2 environmental response, energy, and food security tax is  
3 appropriate for this purpose. The legislature further finds  
4 that the establishment of community readiness centers will  
5 require dedicated funding and that there is a nexus between the  
6 need for community readiness centers and the use of petroleum  
7 and other fossil fuels. Therefore, it is appropriate to tax  
8 petroleum and other fossil fuel usage to fund community  
9 readiness centers.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 11 (1) Establish the community readiness centers program to  
12 be implemented and administered by the Hawaii  
13 emergency management agency;
- 14 (2) Establish the community readiness centers special fund  
15 for the implementation and administration of the  
16 community readiness centers program;
- 17 (3) Rename the environmental response, energy, and food  
18 security tax to the environmental response, energy,  
19 food security, and resilience tax;



(4) Allocate portions of the environmental response, energy, food security, and resilience tax into the community readiness centers special fund; and

(5) Appropriate moneys to acquire lands for community readiness centers and for an emergency operations center.

SECTION 2. Chapter 127A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

**"§127A-A Community readiness centers program; established.**

(a) There is established the community readiness centers program within the agency to set up community readiness centers in various communities to ensure emergency preparedness by providing training and emergency information, supplies, and basic medical care during and after an emergency event. The community readiness centers shall also be used to store and refrigerate medical supplies and provide a place for residents to charge electrical devices and access the Internet.

(b) In implementing and administering the community readiness centers program, the agency shall:



- 1        (1) Identify potential site locations for the  
2        establishment of community readiness centers;
- 3        (2) Negotiate and arrange for the purchase or lease of  
4        suitable sites;
- 5        (3) Contract to design and construct community readiness  
6        centers, which may include retrofitting current  
7        structures; provided that if constructed on an empty  
8        site, the agency shall ensure that the community  
9        readiness centers will abide by the International Code  
10       Council 500 standard, which is capable of withstanding  
11       two hundred fifty miles per hour wind or category five  
12       hurricanes;
- 13       (4) Install a solar and back-up battery storage system,  
14       multiple electrical charging stations, internet  
15       access, and the capability to refrigerate medical  
16       supplies at each community readiness center site; and
- 17       (5) Obtain suitable emergency supplies, including  
18       non-perishable food, and equip each community  
19       readiness center site with emergency supplies.
- 20       (c) The agency shall develop a selection criteria matrix  
21       of standards necessary for constructing community readiness



centers in consultation with the Hawaii earthquake and tsunami advisory committee, state hazard mitigation forum, Hawaii advisory council on emergency management, and county emergency management administrators; provided that this consultation process shall include identifying geographic areas where community readiness center sites would be able to withstand natural disasters.

(d) The agency shall utilize the partnership established through the Hawaii hazards awareness and resilience program to maintain each of the community readiness centers.

**§127A-B Community readiness centers special fund; established.** (a) There is established within the state treasury the community readiness centers special fund, into which shall be deposited:

- (1) Appropriations made by the legislature;
- (2) Interest earned on any moneys in the fund; and
- (3) Moneys from the environmental response, energy, food security, and resilience tax pursuant to section 243-3.5.

(b) Moneys in the fund shall be administered by the agency and used for the following purposes:



1        (1) The purchase or lease of suitable community readiness  
2        centers sites;

3        (2) The design and construction of community readiness  
4        centers, which may include the retrofitting of  
5        existing structures;

6        (3) The installation of solar panels and a back-up battery  
7        storage system at each community readiness center  
8        site;

9        (4) The installation of electrical charging stations,  
10       internet access, and capability to refrigerate medical  
11       supplies at each community readiness center;

12       (5) The purchase of suitable emergency supplies for  
13       community readiness centers; and

14       (6) The administration and maintenance of community  
15       readiness centers."

16       SECTION 3. Section 128D-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
17       amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

18       "(a) There is created within the state treasury an  
19       environmental response revolving fund, which shall consist of  
20       moneys appropriated to the fund by the legislature, moneys paid  
21       to the fund as a result of departmental compliance proceedings,



1 moneys paid to the fund pursuant to court-ordered awards or  
2 judgments, moneys paid to the fund in court-approved or  
3 out-of-court settlements, all interest attributable to  
4 investment of money deposited in the fund, moneys deposited in  
5 the fund from the environmental response, energy, ~~and~~ food  
6 security, and resilience tax pursuant to section 243-3.5, and  
7 moneys allotted to the fund from other sources."

8 SECTION 4. Section 201-12.8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
9 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

10 "(a) There is created within the state treasury an energy  
11 security special fund, which shall consist of:

12 (1) The portion of the environmental response, energy,  
13 ~~and~~ food security, and resilience tax specified  
14 under section 243-3.5;

15 (2) Moneys appropriated to the fund by the legislature;

16 (3) All interest attributable to investment of money  
17 deposited in the fund; and

18 (4) Moneys allotted to the fund from other sources,  
19 including under section 196-6.5."



SECTION 5. Section 243-3.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending its title and subsections (a) and (b) to read as follows:

**"§243-3.5 Environmental response, energy, ~~and~~ food security, and resilience tax; uses.**

(a) In addition to any other taxes provided by law, subject to the exemptions set forth in section 243-7, there is hereby imposed a state environmental response, energy, ~~and~~ food security, and resilience tax on each barrel or fractional part of a barrel of petroleum product sold by a distributor to any retail dealer or end user of petroleum product, other than a refiner. The tax shall be \$1.05 on each barrel or fractional part of a barrel of petroleum product that is not aviation fuel; provided that of the tax collected pursuant to this subsection:

(1) 5 cents of the tax on each barrel shall be deposited into the environmental response revolving fund established under section 128D-2;

(2) 4 cents of the tax on each barrel shall be deposited into the energy security special fund established under section 201-12.8;



(3) 5 cents of the tax on each barrel shall be deposited into the energy systems development special fund established under section 304A-2169.1;

(4) 3 cents of the tax on each barrel shall be deposited into the electric vehicle charging system subaccount established pursuant to section 269-33(e); [and]

(5) 3 cents of the tax on each barrel shall be deposited into the hydrogen fueling system subaccount established pursuant to section 269-33(f) ~~[-]~~; and

(6)       cents of the tax on each barrel shall be deposited into the community readiness centers special fund established pursuant to section 127A-B.

The tax imposed by this subsection shall be paid by the distributor of the petroleum product.

(b) In addition to subsection (a), the tax shall also be imposed on each one million British thermal units of fossil fuel sold by a distributor to any retail dealer or end user, other than a refiner, of fossil fuel. The tax shall be 19 cents on each one million British thermal units of fossil fuel; provided that of the tax collected pursuant to this subsection:



(1) 4.8 per cent of the tax on each one million British thermal units shall be deposited into the environmental response revolving fund established under section 128D-2;

(2) 14.3 per cent of the tax on each one million British thermal units shall be deposited into the energy security special fund established under section 201-12.8; ~~and~~

(3) 9.5 per cent of the tax on each one million British thermal units shall be deposited into the energy systems development special fund established under section 304A-2169.1~~[-]~~; and

(4) \_\_\_\_\_ per cent of the tax on each one million British thermal units shall be deposited into the community readiness centers special fund established pursuant to section 127A-B.

The tax imposed by this subsection shall be paid by the distributor of the fossil fuel."

SECTION 6. Section 304A-2169.1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:



1       "(b) Deposits into the special fund may be from the  
2 following:

3       (1) Appropriations from the legislature;

4       (2) A portion of the environmental response, energy, [and]  
5 food security, and resilience tax pursuant to  
6 section 243-3.5; and

7       (3) Investment earnings, gifts, donations, or other income  
8 received by the Hawaii natural energy institute."

9       SECTION 7. The Hawaii emergency management agency shall  
10 submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including  
11 any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than  
12 twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of  
13 2026. The report shall contain information relating to:

14       (1) The timeline for identifying community readiness  
15 centers, both public and private;

16       (2) The use of funding sources;

17       (3) Any partnerships with federal and county agencies and  
18 community groups;

19       (4) Any collaboration and communication with stakeholders;

20       (5) The annual projected amount of funding based on  
21 sources of revenue; and



1 (6) Any other relevant information about the community  
2 readiness centers program.

3 SECTION 8. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 for  
6 the acquisition of lands for community readiness centers and the  
7 emergency operations center on the parcel of land identified as  
8 tax map key: (1) 9-5-002-003.

9 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
10 defense for the purposes of this Act; provided that the  
11 appropriation made by this section shall not lapse at the end of  
12 the fiscal year for which the appropriation is made; provided  
13 further that all moneys from the appropriation unencumbered as  
14 of June 30, 2027, shall lapse as of that date.

15 SECTION 9. With the approval of the governor, the  
16 department of defense may delegate to other state agencies the  
17 implementation of projects related to this Act when it is  
18 determined advantageous to do so by both the department of  
19 defense and the agency to which the authority is to be  
20 delegated.



1       SECTION 10. In codifying the new sections added by  
2 section 2 and referenced by section 5 of this Act, the revisor  
3 of statutes shall substitute appropriate section numbers for the  
4 letters used in designating the new sections in this Act.

5       SECTION 11. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
6 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

7       SECTION 12. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



**Report Title:**

HIEMA; Community Readiness Centers; Community Readiness Centers Special Fund; Environmental Response, Energy, and Food Security Tax; Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Community Readiness Centers Program to be implemented and administered by the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. Establishes the Community Readiness Centers Special Fund to fund the Community Readiness Centers Program. Renames the Environmental Response, Energy, and Food Security Tax to the Environmental Response, Energy, Food Security, and Resilience Tax and directs a portion of the tax into the Community Readiness Centers Special Fund. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates moneys to acquire lands for community readiness centers and for an emergency operations center. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

